

KRMS- News- talk 1150

July 12, 2008

Heart Attack and Stroke Plan Signed into Law

A state representative from Camden County sponsored a medical plan signed into law by Governor Matt Blunt Friday. State Representative Wayne Cooper of Camdenton created legislation that will change the way heart attack and stroke patients seek emergency care.

Cooper's bill calls for hospitals to earn heart attack and stroke center designations based on capability, the same way they presently earn trauma center designations.

Cooper hopes the new plan will cut down on deaths from strokes and heart attacks across the state.

"Hundreds of Missourians are rushed to hospitals each year with heart attacks and stroke, two of the top three causes of death in Missouri; a third of all the deaths in Missouri are caused by one of those two," Cooper said.

The heart attack and stroke center designations will not be created overnight. Representative Cooper's new law establishes procedures for local and regional plans for their development.

"It will be an ongoing process-the hospitals have to survey what the resources are in all the different regions, it will be a regionalized plan, and then the EMS system has to get all revved up, and so there is still a lot of work for the task force in getting everything ready," Cooper said.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior services will provide the vast majority of the oversight in installing and maintaining the plan for heart attack and stroke centers.